

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A mineral composition, ~~characterized in that the mineral composition comprises 100 parts by weight of~~ comprising:

a metal salt having a solubility product in water at 25°C of  $1.0 \times 10^{-7}$  or less and ~~0.5 to 50 parts by weight of~~

an emulsifier having an HLB of 6 to 10,

wherein the metal salt comprises fine particles having an average particle size of 0.05 to 1  $\mu\text{m}$ ,

wherein the emulsifier comprises a diglycerol fatty acid ester and an amount of the emulsifier is 0.5 to 50 parts by weight, based on 100 parts by weight of the metal salt, and

wherein a monoester content of the diglycerol fatty acid ester is 50% by weight or more.

Claims 2-3. (Cancelled).

4. (Currently Amended) The mineral composition ~~according to any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein the metal salt is a salt of at least one member selected from ~~metal salts comprising the group consisting of~~ calcium, magnesium, iron ~~[[or]]~~ and zinc.

5. (Previously Presented) A food or beverage comprising the mineral composition as defined in claim 1.

6. (New) The mineral composition according to claim 1, wherein the metal salt is selected

from the group consisting of calcium carbonate, calcium phosphate, magnesium phosphate, magnesium oxide, ferric pyrophosphate, zinc hydroxide, zinc pyrophosphate, zinc oxide and dolomite having a  $\text{MgCO}_3 \cdot \text{CaCO}_3$  composition.

7. (New) The mineral composition according to claim 1, wherein the emulsifier does not include enzymatically decomposed lecithins.

8. (New) The mineral composition according to claim 1, wherein the HLB of the emulsifier is from 6 to 9.

9. (New) The mineral composition according to claim 1, wherein the HLB of the emulsifier is from 7 to 9.

10. (New) The mineral composition according to claim 1, wherein the amount of the emulsifier is from 1 to 40 parts by weight, based on 100 parts by weight of the metal salt.

11. (New) The mineral composition according to claim 1, wherein the amount of the emulsifier is from 5 to 30 parts by weight, based on 100 parts by weight of the metal salt.

12. (New) The mineral composition according to claim 1, wherein the monoester content of the diglycerol fatty acid ester is 70% by weight or more.